3/21/69

Dear Gary,

Tonight something I'd once feared caught me by surprise. It remains on my mind and more than the persisting tiredness from the fever it keeps me from putting my mind to writing. I worried that Ray would come up with a kook lawyer, but I did not expect the NSRP. The fox is finally in the chickenhouse. I have been after Bud for a week to make some kind of approach to Ray, directly or through the brother. As with all of us, he does things his own way. He went to see Hanes instead! So, he's got a preview of what we need no preview, their monster red plot. We'd have gotten that from Eastland, anyway. But it was obvious that before long Ray'd know he got screwed and would do something. We've muffed a very good chance, at least for the time being. We are consistent, though....

By now I'd hoped to hear from you, telling me what you'd learned of N.O. What interests me most is anything on state or condition of mind. That is what worries me most. I do not expect you got a dispassionate appraisal, but if you got any indications at all along that line it could be meaningful.

Fact as, as we were driving home from shopping, Lil and I shared concern, not having heard from you for so long. If you are school-busy, then just a quick note to say you are okay.

I'll be leaving for New York early Thursday morning. I'll be gone through Saturday. I make a speech above there and will use this as an occasion to try and get together with a lawyer. I've sought no radio appearances and will seek none, for I'd best drop that all-night jazz until I recover some strength.

Spring is here and it is beautiful, green forcing its way in varied healthy hues, the birds gamboling and eating their heads off, sap in the trees I take down occasionally, etc. Ive been spending an hour or two a day taking the alders from around the pond, going slowly not to frighten a pair of mallards I'd enticed into residence. However, I think the changes in themselves may have been enough to alert the survival instincts, for today they disappeared. I'll leave the rest of the alders alone for a while and see if they return. I'd like them to nest here. They showed signs, along the bank, on a line from the living room to the cabin.

I've been using the period of illness and weakness for catching up on some reading. Glad I hadn't read Auto. Malcolm X sooner, in flush guilt feeling. I have no doubt he was an important, pioneering leader who preached hate when it had to be preached. I also have no doubt he was not progressive, was a philosophical fascist. I have difficulty believing he was that sold, that sincere about that obvious old fakir-charlatan Muhammad.

Stick to your school work, but fill me in when you can. Had one call from Matt, who says he's interviewed number jurors. Consensus: Russo cost them case.

Hope you had a good holiday.

Sincerely,

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